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Panama: Opposition Coalition Presidential Candidacy Declared Unconstitutional By Authentic Panamanian Party

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On April 25, the Authentic Panamanian Party (PPA) denounced Guillermo Endara's presidential candidacy as unconstitutional. Endara heads the ticket of the Civic Opposition Democratic Alliance (ADOC), a coalition of three parties. According to the PPA, Endara dropped out of that party in late 1988, and has not yet renounced his party membership. The PPA statement, released only 12 days before the elections, said that Endara sought to resolve his party membership problems by simply establishing a new "Arnulfista party." When long-time PPA chief, Arnulfo Arias, died last year, the party split. Panama's Electoral Tribunal granted official recognition to a minority faction of the party, headed by Hildebrando Nicosia (PPA presidential candidate), allowing it exclusive use of the party's symbols and facilities. The majority wing, headed by Endara, was forced to move to another party. If the Electoral Tribunal does not ratify the establishment of the new party founded by Endara and his associates, his candidacy will be annulled. In this event, Christian Democrat Ricardo Arias would run for president on the ADOC ticket. (Basic data from Notimex, 04/26/89)

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